1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5

them to resort to ritual means. Neither their own nor their neighbor's consciences would allow them to let a member of the family die without the attempt to benefit from supernatural intervention.

It was probably these two factors, social pressure and fear of leaving any method untried, which opened the way for the very notable acceptance of Western medicine in Taiwan. While the skeptic is thus forced by them to call upon the shaman, the traditionalists are likewise forced to call upon Western medicine when traditional methods have failed. As we saw in the case of the baby girl who died, the village did not feel that calling even upon two shamans was a clear indication that the family wanted the child to live; it was strongly felt that a Western doctor should have been called in as well. The general disapproval is not simply an example of the increased faith in Western medicine, but a reflection of a total attitude toward the control of unknown and powerful forces. After all, the microbe theory of illness is often, even in the enlightened West, only another species of demonology.

Many of the functions of the magical rituals we have just discussed are also similar for the religious (*pai-pai*) rites. People look forward to the many *pai-pai* held in the village area. At the very least they offer a change in the daily routine of life. Many of them are occasions filled with thrills and excitement (*je nao*). This is particularly true of shamanistic rituals, and scores of villagers may flock to the scene of the performance. Young boys and men who have worked in Taipei and who, for various reasons, have been forced to return to the village almost always attend such events. These men seem to yearn for something to replace the excitement of the city.

Since community pressures for thrift also have tended to standardize the villagers' diet, even the most insignificant *pai-pai* represents an opportunity to eat better than ordinary food. A village family, unless wealthy, is criticized for eating any but the simplest food on ordinary days. People gossip behind their backs about their extravagance and general lack of thrift. Then, if the family should have to borrow money or need village aid at a future date, people may cite their extravagance and irresponsibility as a reason for refusing them. Thus, even the simplest *pai-pai*, like those held on the first, second, fifteenth, and sixteenth of each month, offer people a welcome justification for eating good food, and the bigger the *pai-pai*, the better the food.

The most obvious functions of the *pai-pai* are often recognized by the villagers themselves. There are several other important functions that the villagers may not talk about unless they are questioned about them.

Although in the process of organizing and administering *pai-pai*

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5

native soil, it usually becomes unimportant in the face of better economic opportunities off the land. As we saw in Chapter 4 especially, it is not only peasants who will willingly sell their land once other forms of economic security are firmly established elsewhere, but even the wealthy landlord of long-standing tradition on the land in the area. Such a man who, if anyone, is well indoctrinated with the concept of the Great (Confucian) Tradition and the value placed on ancestral land has willingly sold off not only sections of land since the land reform but even his total family landholdings when outside commercial investment seemed more feasible. When a peasant family establishes itself in Taipei or another urban center and retains its land, it apparently does so for economic security only, not for the land's "symbolic value." Also, migration to a city by Hsin Hsing area villagers if economically successful, is very frequently conceived as a permanent rather than a temporary family move. This seems to be quite different from numerous observations in various areas of the mainland by Kulp (1925:42–45), M. Yang (1945:229), and C. K. Yang (1959:71–75), where migration was almost always undertaken as a temporary measure.

Families who remain in the village regardless of their inability to reap an adequate living from insufficient landholdings do so because they consider village life a more desirable way to live. Since there is little industry and few steady work opportunities in the local area, some find low paying and seasonal jobs as local laborers or establish some kind of itinerant business operation to supplement their meager income. Others are switching from the traditional rice crops to cash crops such as vegetables for market. This development has occurred despite the obstacles which the government, perhaps inadvertently, places in the way of farmers who wish to grow almost anything other than rice as their main crop.

Apparently, these people care more for the continued enjoyment of a rural mode of life than for the land itself. Many, having tried city life and work, come back to live and work in the village primarily because they did not like the urban conditions. These people do not remain in the village and on the land for conservative reasons or as a reaction to change. In Hsin Hsing, it is this group of people which is most active in the community. They bring about internal economic and social changes in the village through their attempt to improve agricultural methods, which brings them into contact with government and JCRR agriculture agents as well as with farmers in the surrounding rural area. This group stands in contrast to a larger group of conservative villagers who have continued to cultivate their diminishing land base in the traditional manner.

CHAPTER 6

THE LIMITING CONDITIONS

182 59 In terms of their long range effects upon the development of the family, decisions about marriage and adoption may have one of two possible consequences. They may serve to perpetuate the family's existence as a social entity, or they may bring about the demise of the family with the death of its present members. For example, a family with only female children may give them away in adoption or allow them to marry out of the family, thus precluding the possibility of descendents, or they may adopt male children or arrange a matrilocal marriage for one of their daughters as a means of insuring genealogical continuity. From the point of view of society, as it is represented in the institutions of the village, either of these two choices are within the range of social possibility. From the point of view of the individual family, however, any choice which leads to the death of the family line 181 is not a real alternative. The motivation to achieve social continuity 182 is as strong among the people of Hsiachichou as the biological urge 59 to reproduce. To die without children and without hope of grandchildren and great-grandchildren is the worst of all possible fates. We must therefore begin our analysis of decisions regarding marriage and adoption with a discussion of the reasons for this concern with social continuity. We have here a motivation which enters into all decisions concerning marriage and adoption, and which immediately precludes a

family's giving serious consideration to many socially acceptable alternatives.

The most obvious reason for this concern with social continuity and the reason which is most easily stated by the villagers themselves, is economic security. The village of Hsiachichou is not impoverished, but neither is it affluent. The line between the rich and the poor separates those who eat rice at a meal and those who must mix their rice with sweet potato. As the villagers themselves would put it, "Everyone here has something to eat, but no one can afford to eat out of the middle of the pan." With the exception of those families who have the advantages of neither land nor education, and who are as a result forced to earn a living as coolies or coal miners, the people of Hsiachichou are able to support themselves fairly comfortably. The majority of village houses are constructed of brick with sturdy tile roofs; many village families own a radio or phonograph; a number of families have their own water supply in the house and one has installed an electric pump; and all but the very poorest of village families own at least one bicycle, adequate if not comfortable furniture, and are able to meet their social obligations with appropriate gifts and invitations. What the average family in Hsiachichou does not have is the financial ability to accumulate savings. Their income is adequate to feed, clothe, and house themselves in a reasonably comfortable manner, but there is no surplus out of which a family can create a reserve. When faced with a major expenditure occasioned by a serious illness, a marriage, the funeral of a senior member, or the need to

*593 602 888 [189] the answers given were less equivocal. The majority agreed that the most they could expect was "a cheap coffin," and many felt that even this was setting one's expectations too high, one man replying that "they would just throw you in the river." The norms of the society enjoin a man to support an elderly and destitute relative, but there is little expectation that these norms will be honored. A man's only alternative therefore is to have children who are bound to him by the formal requirements of filial piety and the natural sentiment of the parent child relationship. As a villager explained, "On Taiwan no one asks you how much land you have. Here people ask you how many sons you have. You can work when you are young, but when you are old you have to have children to take care of you."

*593 191 842 888 When asked the most important reason for having children, several villagers insisted that economic security was the only reason. Playing on Mencius's famous dictum, one man told us that "the most unfilial thing a son could do was not to support his parents," and another younger man answered by quoting a proverb to the effect that "it is better to have money in one's pocket than sons in one's house." But like all sarcasm and most wit, these answers only have force as comments on an accepted value. A man must have sons to support him in his old age, and he must provide these sons with wives if he is to expect them to fulfill their obligations as sons, but were old age security his only concern his interest in descendants would end here. As we have seen already, most men do not live long enough even to see their grandchildren marry, and so there is little need for a man to have grandchildren

as insurance against a destitute old age. Yet one of the most compelling concerns of most elderly villagers is "to see their grandchildren before they die." In order to achieve this goal, they often force their sons into early marriages, and, if their son's wives prove barren, they may threaten to repudiate them, or if necessary, even adopt grandchildren. It is a great joy for an elderly man to be able to say that he has many children and grandchildren "to see me to the mountain when I die," and it is the great hope of every grandparent that he will be one of those few whose funeral procession is led by a small child dressed in blue, the mourning color for the deceased's great-grandchildren. Beyond the need to have someone to support you in your old age is the need to have descendants, to die assured that there will be someone to perpetuate the family line. To insure the comfort of one's old age is an important motive for having children, but the full value of children cannot be entirely represented in economic terms. They stand as testimony of a man's having fulfilled his duty to his own parents, and they make secure his own achievements and his claim on the future.

On the altar which stands opposite the main door to every village home are the family's ancestral tablets, small rectangular slips of planed wood, rounded on the top like grave-stones, and inscribed with the posthumous names of the deceased members of the family. Since the family is ideally patrilineal, these typically include the head of the household's father and mother, his father's father and father's mother, and so forth, for as many as five or six generations. The general rule is that a family's tablets will include all of those

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Aside from her responsibility to her husband's family, a woman has more personal reasons for wanting to bear children. For one thing, barrenness is the most indelible of all stigmas. Old women who are quarreling will often accuse one another of being barren. It implies not only an abnormal physical state, but also something of a failure of character. To bear children is so important that those who fail to do so must lack some essential moral quality. For another, it is only through her children that a woman can realize her position as a wife. The only common ground between a husband and wife in the early years of their marriage is their children. Often they marry as almost total strangers, and etiquette demands that they remain distant to one another. As the village women express it, the children "give you something to talk to each other about." Finally, a woman's having any sense of security in her husband's home depends on her having children. Although the average village woman realizes that her husband's parents cannot afford to repudiate her, she also knows that they will never accept her until she provides them with grandchildren. It is by virtue of her children that a woman secures her status as a member of her husband's family. She herself may never become a full fledged member of the family until she dies, but as the mother of the family's male descendants she secures a position of respect. It is nothing to be a wife or a daughter-in-law, but it is a matter of pride to be a mother.

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Beyond those reasons we have already discussed, there are more general, less easily exemplified reasons for having children. One has

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only to observe the excited anticipation of the older villagers, both men and women, when the birth of a child is imminent to realize that children have an intrinsic value. An old woman whose sons had not as yet given her grandchildren told us sadly of how quiet her house was, how lacking in noise and bustle. There is no life without children in the house. One also senses living in the village that children give a man a sense of fulfillment, of involvement in something larger than the narrow circle of the present. The young men who say that they will give up ancestor worship "when the old people die," nevertheless think of the family as an unbroken chain that began long ago and that will continue long after they are gone. Not to have children would be to take responsibility for breaking this chain, and, perhaps more important, without children the achievements of this life would lose much of their meaning. If by means of a lifetime of hard work and self denial, a man adds a small plot of land to his family's possessions, it does not appreciably raise his own standard of living, but when the value of the land is multiplied by its benefits to the untold generations that will follow, a man has reason for satisfaction. It is partially for this reason that a person must have children to inherit the property of his fathers. His father calculated the value of the land he acquired in terms of its benefits to his descendants, and if there are no descendants it is then worth no more than the few catties of rice it will yield before the present generation dies. As one of our thoughtful informants put it,

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"Our fathers leave us land, graves to care for, a business. If we do not have children to inherit these things in their turn, then the efforts of our fathers will be meaningless."

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There are, then, many reasons why a family must have children and grandchildren. Without descendants a person faces an old age of loneliness and suffering which will continue into his existence after death. Besides his personal sufferings, he will bring down upon the long line of ancestors who preceded him an existence of homelessness and hunger. Even if he is among those few who question the active existence of a life after death, he will hesitate to assume responsibility for breaking the chain that began long before and could continue long after him. Given the values of the society in which he lives, the achievements of his own life will taste of the futility of last night's pleasures.

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That this concern for social continuity is real is evident in the actual genealogical composition of Hsiachichou in 1960. At that time there were 79 men of thirty years of age or more living in the village, and 93 women of thirty years of age or more. Of these 79 men 6 had never been married, and 6 were married to women who had not as yet born children. Of the 93 women 12 had never been married, and 5 of those who had been married had never borne children. Yet of the 79 men all but 3 had living children or grandchildren, and of the 93 women all had living children or grandchildren. Social continuity is

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of such importance that regardless of the barriers which stand in their way almost every villager manages to provide himself with descendants. It may be by way of adoption, or it may be by claiming his or her

181 illegitimate offspring, but in one way or another the goal is achieved,
842 indeed, must be achieved. It is therefore obvious that we need not consider as real alternatives any set of choices that would lead to family extinction. Whatever else their goals may be with regard to marriage and adoption, a family must make decisions which will lead to the perpetuation of their line.

*597 nothing less than a small fortune. A go-between acting for some local
511 party could usually get as much as a year's income for a male child, and
435 dealers who bought male children on Taiwan for resale in Amoy would some-
*597 times offer even more. The returns from the sale of a male child would
511 at the very least enable a family to replace a thatch roof with tile,
454 and it might even finance the purchase of a small plot of land or pro-
vide the capital for a small business undertaking. Since a family's
regular income went almost entirely for food and other daily essentials,
it was only by such means that a family might obtain the capital for
178 any major investment. We must also remember that it was not the parents
*543 of the child who decided his fate. Most children are born during that
*597 phase of the family cycle at which their grandparents are still alive
603 and active, and in the years before 1930 this senior generation had
complete and final authority over all decisions concerning marriage
and adoption. Although one can understand that a parent with only
one male child would be reluctant to sell him for any price, one can
imagine that a grandparent with several grandchildren might find it
somewhat easier to part with one of his sons' male children.

*597 While there were good reasons for a family to sell one of its male
*562 children, there were even more important considerations weighing against
842 such a decision. As we have seen in the last chapter, male children
• 181 are the focal concern of the Hokkien family. It is by means of his
male descendants that a man fulfills his most important responsibilities
as son and grandson, and it is with reference to his male offspring
that a person calculates the achievement of his own lifetime. If a

family is to have any security in either this life or the next, they must have children who are obliged to them as heirs and descendants. As a result, male children have an absolute value, their worth to their family being something which cannot be estimated in monetary terms. A family may be forced by extreme poverty to sell one or more of their children in order to support themselves and their remaining children, but they would never sell a male as a means of adding to their material possessions. To trade a male child for property would simply not make sense to most people in Hsiachichou, for it is with reference to sons and grandsons that property acquires much of its value. As one of our village informants put it when we asked him why so few people sell their sons, "There is no point in having money or land if you don't have children. Who will inherit these things if you have no sons or grandsons? And who will you have to carry on your family name when you are dead?"

Of 110 male children born into Hsiachichou before 1930 only 8 (7 percent) were sold as bíeng-liâng-kiá, and in every case the family selling the child was poor by local standards. We know that not one of these families owned land other than their own house site, and so far as their neighbors remember none had any income from a business or trade. Four of the eight children sold were sons of a village woman by the name of Ong Chun-a whose family was probably the poorest in the village. According to Ong Chun-a, "We had to sell those children. We were starving then, and they offered a very good price. Besides, I had to sell my milk to make money." It is interesting to note that

Decisions about the sîn-pûa form of marriage are usually made by the boy's parents or grandparents when the child himself is only two or three years of age. It is therefore important to note at the outset that it is their right and duty to make this decision in terms of their own best interests and the best interests of the family. The child's own interests may be set aside as a consideration of secondary importance without any risk of social disapprobation or personal guilt. A parent may sympathize with his son if his marriage turns out to be a personally unhappy one, but he need not feel guilty because he was responsible for the decision. It was simply not his responsibility to consider the child's personal happiness in making a decision about his marriage. Children exist for the sake of their parents and for the sake of the family, not the family and the parents for the sake of their children. Although the Christian and the Chinese peasant agree that one of the primary functions of the family is to beget children, they base their conclusions on entirely different premises. The Christian must be a father for the sake of the children; the Chinese farmer must be a father because it his duty as a son. For the Christian the greater obligation always rests with the parents, while for the Chinese the greater obligation always rests with the children. They must obey and respect their parents; work for their parents' support and comfort; and eventually marry and provide descendants to insure their parents' security in the next world. So basic is this atiitude to the Chinese view of family life that should a child die before his parents, his father may justly beat his coffin with a stick

597 They therefore begin to press the wife of a first born son to adopt
842 a daughter much sooner than they do in the case of the wife of a later born son.

597 We have now seen some of the considerations which may cause a family
562 to give away its own children in adoption, and we have also isolated
858 some of the factors which may influence a family to adopt a child.
181 Before turning to our next topic it is worthwhile to pause for a moment to consider the total effect of these considerations upon the flow of male and female children between families. As a consequence of the preference for patrilineal descent and patrilocal marriage, males are highly valued and have a universal utility. It is important for a family to have male children to inherit their property and perpetuate their line, and a male child may play this role in either his natal family or in a foster family. The result is a great demand for male children and at the same time a low rate of male adoption. Many families which do not have sons of their own would like to adopt a male child, but the high value placed upon male children makes this difficult. Relatives are unwilling to surrender their own heirs and descendants and those who are willing to sell male children can ask a price which many families cannot afford. The situation of the male child is thus very much like that of a scarce commodity in a market economy. Insofar as males do change hands, they pass from those who have to sell them to those who can afford to buy them, but most people do not participate in the exchange at all. The great majority of those who want male children cannot afford to buy them, and most of those who have male children are unwilling to sell them.

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ter 1910 a total of 17(17 percent)made matrilocal marriages. Here again we find a demonstration of a point we have made several times already. Although many aspects of marriage and adoption have changed in Hsiachichou in recent years, the basic meaning and values of the family have not changed. When a decision about marriage or adoption involves the possibility of a family's not achieving the goal of genealogical continuity, they make and somehow manage to enforce whatever decision is necessary in order to achieve this goal.

2:Wolf E-5 (1958-1961) 1964 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
Hsiachichou

CHAPTER 14

CONCLUSIONS AND REFLECTIONS

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The most important goals in the lives of the people of Hsiachichou set certain requirements for the membership of the family. A man must have descendants to support him in his old age and carry on the family rites after his death. To this end he must somehow obtain children and then see that these children marry and perpetuate his line. The various rules governing the transfer of persons between families offer him alternative ways of achieving these ends. If his wife does not bear him sons, he can either adopt a male child from an agnate or purchase a child, or, if the necessity arises, he can use one of his daughters to bring a son-in-law into the family through a matrilocal marriage. Wives for a man's sons can be adopted as children or brought into the family by means of the preferred form of marriage, and unwanted daughters can be given away as children or allowed to marry out of the family as young adults. By offering alternative ways of achieving important goals the various forms of marriage and adoption create for every family a number of recurring decisions about its membership. We have attempted here to describe the decisions which produced the recent genealogical history of Hsiachichou and also to discover what some of the factors were which made any given choice more or less likely.

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One of the most important observations which we might make about these decisions is that they are regular. Rather than being the products of an infinity of conditions reflecting the individuality of each family,

3:Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
Peihotien

chapter 5

[P.45]

LIM HUE-LIENG: AN ELDEST SON

Lim Hue-lieng entered this world as the first son of his parents and the first grandchild of his grandparents. His birth was thus almost certainly a matter of great joy in the Lim household. His mother's isolation as a daughter-in-law was now at an end: until a woman bears a male child she is only a provisional member of her husband's household, merely a daughter-in-law; with the birth of a son, she becomes the mother of one of its descendants, a position of prestige and respect. The birth of his first son must also have been a moment of significance for Lim Han-ci. A man with a son becomes a link in the long chain of descent. His struggle with the land for enough to eat takes on new meaning: he will one day be the head of a household, the senior representative of the family, no longer an adult child living under the authority of his father. And if the birth of their first male child is a matter of rejoicing for the child's parents, the birth of their first grandchild is even more of an eventful day in the lives of the child's paternal grandparents. The joy of every elderly Chinese is to spend his declining years in the company of his grandchildren, and it is a matter of great pride for a man to know that he has grandsons as well as sons "to see him to the mountains." They are tangible proof that his line of descent will continue, that offerings will always be laid on his ancestral altar, and that the work of his own life will be multiplied in its benefits. More than anything else, they stand as evidence that these people have done their duty to their own parents and grandparents

3:Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
Peihotien

and thus is unable to take care of him in his old age, the father is expected to ritually beat the coffin at the funeral, "to punish the child for being so unfilial as to leave his father alone in his old age." One can imagine what the reaction of a man such as Lim Han-ci must have been to this open and public revolt on the part of his son. His neighbors condemned the boy as unfilial, but for Lim Han-ci this held little solace. It only increased his humiliation. Rather than accepting the exoneration of his neighbors, he recognized his failure for what it was. With his remaining children he struggled, with some success, to soften the harshness of his character.

The very fact that Lim Hue-lieng dared to defy his father and set out on his own is evidence of a confident, stubborn personality. He had no money to buy land and establish himself as a farmer, and what few jobs were available in factories and shops usually went to the relatives of the proprietors. Lim Hue-lieng was able to assert his independence without economic disaster because of the unusual qualities of leadership he possessed and the position he was building for himself in the *lo mua*. The *lo mua* is a purely Chinese institution for which it is difficult to find a Western parallel. I am tempted to call it an organization of gangsters because of its methods, but since many of its goals are to uphold the traditional morals of the society, the parallel is specious. The *lo mua* contribute heavily to the repair of temples and to the expenses of religious festivals. They have been known to severely punish outsiders who, from ignorance or poor judgement, suggest lewd activities to respectable women of their area. They frequently protect the down-trodden for no charge, and just as frequently force their protection on the wealthy at near ruinous prices. A business man on bad terms with the *lo mua* may find his shop robbed weekly while his neighbor who is more careful in his relationships hardly need lock his doors at night.

The details of Lim Hue-lieng's career between the time he left his father's home and his reappearance there in his late twenties are known only by way of gossip and hearsay. Probably no one knows all the steps in his career, but by the time he was twenty-five, he had established his leadership over all the *lo mua* in a large section of the Taipei basin, and his influence was felt in the Taipei market place, reputedly the center of *lo mua* activity. I know that he had been jailed a few times, but was always promptly released; that he had been in hiding several times, whether from the police or from rivals I am not

3:Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
Peihotien

sides with either Lim Chieng-cua's part of the family or Lim A-pou's. I could never lead her or her mother into a discussion of the schism in the main family, and in answer to direct questions I received only cluckings of sympathy. In trying to decide where their sympathies might most reasonably rest, I found myself hard put to come up with a feasible hypothesis. Lim Chieng-cua's coolness to his brother and, until recently, complete disregard of his brother's second wife, should disincline them to favor his side, even though he is the head of the household. Lim A-pou's ill treatment of So-lan and the latter's uneasy compunction at having contributed to Lim Hue-lieng's estrangement from his legal family would not particularly make for close ties with that part of the family either, even though there are undeniable blood ties in the second generation. I was left with a frustrating if dignified lack of information which was not the case with any of the other family fragments related to the Lims.

To the casual observer, Lim So-lan's position in the world is quite good. The quarrels between her daughters and between Gioq-ki and her husband probably attract more attention than do other family quarrels because of the strong personalities involved, but not because they are outside the broad range of behavior considered normal in Taiwanese society. Lim So-lan is respected by all who know her as a woman who works hard, pays her debts, and is not inclined to ease her loneliness with malicious gossip. The family income is sufficient for them to eat well and to dress appropriately. They fulfill their social and financial obligations at the weddings and funerals of relatives and give an acceptable number of feasts during the religious festivals. There is nothing indecorous about the fact that So-lan allows gamblers to use her house since they are not professional gamblers and do not bring in outsiders. Her older daughter's difficult personality is accepted with the sigh that covers most idiosyncracies in the village population. Gioq-ki herself has been far too busy with her own problems to meddle in her neighbors' lives.

But in terms of the main tenets of Taiwanese life, Lim So-lan has been tossed into a side pool that must dry up and cease to be. Her marriage (a term which even the most rigid villager would use to describe a liaison that existed for so many years) was irregular in that the children born to her are not descendants of her husband's family. Lim So-lan has no ancestors and her husband's ancestors are the property of the main family. If Lim Hue-lieng and his wife had mar-

4:Barnett E-4.5 (1965-1967) 1970 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
Sanlei Ts'un

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systems.

If a man were to apply the above approach to a series of beliefs, he would be required to accept and internalize some beliefs which are in direct conflict with others. This does not seem to present the problems it might require of a man socialized in terms of Western culture. That is, there does not seem to be the same strong drive for belief consistency, i.e., construction of what has been termed an integrated personality. Francis L. K. Hsu (1953; 1963) has characterized the Chinese personality as "situation-centered" by which he means that a Chinese reacts to his world as if it were compartmentalized; he possesses a segmented personality. "Principles which are correct for one set of circumstances may not be appropriate for another at all, but the principles in each case are equally honorable. In fact, the good Chinese tends to have multiple standards" (1963:2). "The individual feels no resentment against conforming and no compunction about behaving differently under contrasting sets of circumstances" (1963:2). This great difference in approach has seemingly confused Western scholars.

A man who repeatedly offers one opinion, then changes it to the opposite side and then again reverts to the original position is labeled "insincere" according to Western principles. Liao P'o-li, the forty-two year old son of the man who headed the largest extended family in

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121 Sanlei, told me on many different occasions that he did
771 not believe in ghosts or evil spirits. Nevertheless, I
795 saw him make sacrifices of propitiation to ghosts and evil
• 181 spirits and after an accidental death in Erhlei, he refused
156 to come alone to my house to chat as long as he had to pass the body which was laid out in the courtyard. He said he was afraid of the evil spirits which were sure to be lurking near the body. When I argued that he claimed he did not believe in spirits and ghosts, he told me not to be foolish and he would not come until the body was buried. Liao P'o-li was a sincere man who did not believe in spirits in one set of circumstances but did believe in spirits in another. He will continue to oscillate between
121 these positions as situations change. I believe the West-
771 ern scholar is incorrect if he labels China irreligious on the basis of this process. Even though an informant may tell him, "We do not really believe these religious things," the researcher should observe his activities and apply a behavioral yardstick to accurately assess the informant's attitudes.

The fourth and final reason is due to a Western distinction between religion on the one hand and magic or superstition on the other. Gallin points out (1966:232) there is "so complete a mixture of religious and magical belief [in the village he studied] that it is often difficult to determine where one form ends and another begins"